

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION EA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 559
INFO AMCONSUL MEDAN
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C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 10408

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, ID
SUBJECT: GENERAL SUHARDJONO REPLACED AS DIRECTOR GENERAL OF TELE-
COMMUNICATIONS

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. LOCAL PRESS HAS ANNOUNCED THE APPOINTMENT JULY 28 OF NEW DIRECTORS GENERAL FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS, SEA COMMUNICATIONS AND LAND COMMUNICATIONS. THEY ARE M. GEN SURYADI, VICE M. GEN SUHARDJONO; PONKY SUPARJO, VICE REAR ADMIRAL HARYONO NIMPUNO; AND NAZAR NURDIN, VICE GEN SUMPANO BAYUAJI. THE DEPT OF COMMUNICATIONS' TWO OTHER DIRECTORS GENERAL, AIR VICE MARSHAL KARDONO AND LT. GEN ACHMAD TIRTOSUDIRDJO, REMAIN AS DG'S FOR AIR COMMUNICATIONS AND TOURISM, RESPECTIVELY. THERE HAS BEEN NO PUBLIC WORD ON WHETHER OR NOT THE OUTGOING OFFICIALS WILL BE GIVEN NEW RESPONSIBILITIES, ALTHOUGH RUMOR HAS EACH OF THEM BEING GIVEN AN AMBASSADORIAL POST. END UNCLASSIFIED

BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL

2. REMOVAL OF SUHARDJONO, WHO HAS BEEN WIDELY BELIEVED TO BE HIGHLY CORRUPT, MAY BE SOMETHING OF A BREAKTHROUGH.
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ALTHOUGH HIS IMMINENT OUSTER HAD BEEN RUMORED FOR MONTHS, SOME SEASONED OBSERVERS HERE FELT HE WAS SIMPLY TOO WELL ENTRENCHED FOR NEWLY-NAMED MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS RUSMIN NURYADIN TO FIRE. THEY APPARENTLY FAILED TO RECKON WITH THE DETERMINATION OF RUSMIN, ONE OF THE MOST ENERGETIC OF THE NEW CABINET APPOINTEES, TO CLEAN HOUSE. RUSMIN'S SUCCESS IN REMOVING SUHARDJONO AND THE

OTHERS IS PROBABLY DIRECTLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO HIS GOOD ACCESS TO THE PRESIDENT AND GIVES RISE TO HOPE THAT THE BUSINESS DEALINGS OF THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPT WILL BE MORE STRAIGHTFORWARD IN THE FUTURE. MOREOVER, EVEN IF THE MOVE IS UNRELATED TO THE GOI'S ANTI-CORRUPTION DRIVE, ELIMINATION OF SUHARDJONO MAY PROVIDE NEW IMPETUS FOR OPSTIB. AS LONG AS HE REMAINED IN POWER, SUHARDJONO WAS A SYMBOL FOR MANY OF THE GOVERNMENT'S FAILURE TO CLEAN UP THE HIGHER RANKS.

3. ALTHOUGH NEIGHTER MINPUNO NOR BAYUAJI MAY BE ENTIRELY FREE FROM TAINT, THEY WERE NOT GENERALLY BELIEVED TO BE IN THE BIG LEAGUES OF CURRUPTION AS THE TELCOM CHIEF WAS. PIZSTHE PAIR DID HAVE IN COMMON WITH SUHARDJONO, HOWEVER, WAS LONG INCUMBENCY AND THE INDEPENDENT AUTHORITY WHICH OFTEN ACCOMPANIES IT. THE FAILURE OF EMIL SALIM, RUSMIN'S IMMEDIATE PREDECESSOR, TO ACHIEVE MORE DURING HIS TENURE AT COMMUNICATIONS IS IN SOME MEASURE DUE TO HIS INABILITY TO CONTROL THESE POWERFUL FIGURES. RUSMIN OBVIOUSLY FELT THE NEED TO HAVE HIS OWN MEN IN THESE SENSITIVE POSITIONS.

4. SUHARDJONO'S REPLACEMENT, GEN. SURYADI, HAS MOST RECENTLY BEEN ASSISTANT FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTRONICS AT THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE. HE IS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE MOST EXPERIENCED COMMUNICATIONS EXPERTS IN THE CONFIDENTIAL

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MILITARY AND IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR PLANNING AND INTALLATION OF A MODERN DEFENSE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM FOR INDONESIA. SOEPARJO MOVES TO THE TOP SPOT AFTER SERVING FOR SEVERAL MONTHS AS SECRETARY TO DIRECTOR GENERAL MINPUNO. PRIOR TO THAT SOEPARJO, WHO HAS BEEN AT SEA COM SINCE HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE NAVY IN 1965, SERVED AS CHIEF OF SEA COM REGIONAL AFFAIRS OFFICE III COVERING WEST JAVA, AMONG OTHER AREAS. (HIS REPLACEMENT IN THAT JOB WAS FORMER TANJUNG PRIOK (JAKARTA) PORT ADMINISTRATOR J.E. HABIBIE, BROTHER OF THE MINISTER OF RESEARCH. WE UNDERSTAND HABIBIE AGAIN IS TO REPLACE SOEPARJO AND WILL SOON BE NAMED SECRETARY TO THE DIR GEN.) NAZUR NURDIN, A CIVILIAN, ALSO TAKES OVER THE DIRECTOR GENERALSHIP AFTER HAVING BEEN SECRETARY TO DIR GEN BAYUAJI. HE FORMERLY SERVED AS DIRECTOR OF LAND TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION. END CONFIDENTIAL
GARDNER

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